THE BUSINESS EDUCATION WORLD

Successor to The American Shorthand Teacher

JOHN ROBERT GREGG, Editor

CLYDE INSLEY BLANCHARD
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Business Manager

Volume XVIII

September, 1937 — June, 1938

THE GREGG PUBLISHING COMPANY

270 Madison Avenue **New York, New York**

HF1101
.B27

CONTENTS

I Titles and Subjects iii
II Contributors vii
III Organizations, Schools, and Names in the News viii
IV Portraits and Cuts xi

THE BUSINESS EDUCATION WORLD is published monthly (except July and August) by The Gregg Publishing Company, John Robert Gregg, President; Guy S. Fry, Secretary-Treasurer; Hubert A. Hagar, General Manager, 270 Madison Avenue, New York, New York; Boston Office, Statler Building, Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago Office, 6 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois; San Francisco Office, Phelan Building, San Francisco, California; Canadian Office, 1200 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; European Office, The Gregg Publishing Company, Ltd., Gregg House, 51 Russell Square, London, W. C. 1, England; Australian Office, The Gregg Publishing Company (Aust.), Remington House, Liverpool Street, Sydney, New South Wales; Agency for India and Farther India, Progressive Corporation, Ltd., Bombay. Printed in the U. S. A. Member A. B. C.

Subscription rates: $1 a year; 10 cents a copy, in the United States. $1.25 a year to Canada. $1.50 a year to all other foreign countries.

Copyright, 1938, by The Gregg Publishing Company
Printed in the United States of America

Entered as second-class matter December 26, 1935, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Part I

TITLES AND SUBJECTS

A

About the Great Lakes--St. Lawrence Waterway, Louise W. Mears, 477
Accountant Looks at High School Bookkeeping, The, William J. Piepenbrink, 108
Acreage of Eight World Crops, George H. Primmer, 101
Adequate Business Education, An, Walter F. Dexter, 781
Administrative and Executive Problems, Study of, 1, 85, 174, 270, 344, 423, 529, 613, 700, 810
Agency and Partnerships, 132
Artistic Typewriting,
  Margaret M. McGinn, 63, 148, 176, 205, 320, 390, 588, 644, 709, 851
  Of Typewriters and Ships, 535

B

Bank Reconciliation Statements Taught by the Problem Approach, I. David Satlow, 199
Book Reviews, 74, 158, 242, 325, 408, 512, 594, 680, 764, 856
Bookkeeping,
  Accountant Looks at High School Bookkeeping, 108
  Bank Reconciliation Statements, 199
  Closing Procedures, Simplifying, 719
  Consumer Education Lesson Plan for Record Keeping and Budgeting, 435
  Introduction to the Work Sheet, 276
  Making Bookkeeping Abstractions Concrete, 277
  Measuring the Outcomes of, Instruction, 547
  Nonvocational, One-Semester Course, Lloyd V. Douglas, 355
  One-Year Course in, 635
  Projects, Milton Briggs, 48, 217, 300, 386, 483, 571, 658
  School Was Never Like This! 799
  Secretarial Accounting, 438
  Teaching Device, Grace L. Eyrick, 396
  Teaching the Characteristics of Special Journals, 273
  Test on the Classification of Accounts, 806
Business and Romance in the Vieux Carré, Evelyn Soulé-Ford, 754
Business Correspondence (See also Business Letter Projects)
  Classroom Meets Business, The, 135
  How Practical of Aristotle! 834
  Teaching Correspondence Through Class Discussion, 717
Business Education in the Small High School, A. O. Colvin, 206
Business Education's Contributions to General Secondary Education, L. R. Kilzer, 529
Business Field Trip in the Secondary Schools, The, M. E. Broom, 700
Business Law,
  Agency and Partnerships, 132
  Corporations, Case Problem on, 188
  Negotiable Instruments, 67
  Sales, True-False Test on, 263
Business Letter Projects, Dorothy M. Johnson, 44, 213, 298, 384, 481, 569, 656, 827
Business Measures the Applicant, Lloyd L. Jones, 89
Business Methods for the Cosmetology Student, Edna L. Carter, 749

C

Can We Avoid Proofreaders' Illusions? William R. Foster, 705
Certification and Awards, 39, 126A, 210, 294, 378, 481, 566, 656, 664, 744, 821
Cessante Ratione Legis, Cessat Ipsa Lex, Cuddie E. Davidson, 471
Classics in a School of Commerce? Albert Henry, Jr., 311
Classroom Meets Business, The, Erold B. Beach, 135
Club That Is Doing Things, A, Juell Duren, 853
Clubs (See Student Clubs)
Comments on Dr. Henry Harap's Article, Helen Wood, 844
Commercial Awards, Sister Mary Bernard, 591
Commercial Clubs, Spanish, Grace E. Richardson, 404
Commercial Curriculum for the Small High School, Charles Apel, 561
Consumer Economics, A. O. Colvin, 367
Consumer Education,
  Comments on Dr. Harap's Article, 844
  In the Business Curriculum, Henry Harap, 613
  Lesson Plan for Record Keeping and Budgeting, Robert E. Finch, 435
  Notes, Ray G. Price, 685, 756, 841
Contests,
  B.E.W. Annual, 378, 488, 566, 664, 821
  German Stenographic, 232
  Shorthand, Discussion of, 123
Cooperative Recitation, The, William Kesselman, 363
Corporations, Case Problem on, Harvey A. Andruss, 188
Correlating English with Shorthand, Rhoda Tracy, 626
Counting House, The, James A. McFadzen, 273, 355, 435, 547, 799
Cuilibet in Arte Sua Perito Est Credendum, Cuddie E. Davidson, 192
Curriculum,
  Business, 206, 285, 367, 463
  Commercial, for the Small High School, 561

D

Day-by-Day Use of the Gregg Writer, Florence Elaine Ulrich, 77, 134, 245, 327, 414, 602
Department of Standards and Awards, 39, 126A, 210 294, 378, 490, 566, 656, 664, 744, 821
Dexterity Drills in Typewriting, Frank S. Albright, 317
Direct Approach to the Teaching of Typing, M. Fred Tidwell, 789

E

Economic Geography,
About the Great Lakes--St. Lawrence Waterway, 477
Acreage of Eight World Crops, 101
Co-operative Recitation, The, 363
Field Work in, 551
Greater Appreciation of Maps, A, 255
Of Latin America, E. Ray Casto, 193
Population Pattern of the Sierra Nevada, 638
Summary Charts, 19
Textbooks in, 727
Vitalizing the Study of, 815
Effective Plan for Teaching Transcription, An, Wallace W. Renshaw, 351, 455
English (See also Business Correspondence)
Correlating, with Shorthand, 626
Or Shorthand Speed? Louis A. Leslie, 37
Power in Transcription, E. Lillian Hutchinson, 27, 115
Equitas Subvenit Vigilantibus Non Dormientibus, Cuddie E. Davidson, 148
Exhibit of Students' Work, 670

F

Few Ticks Ago, F. V. Powell, 506
Field Trips, 551, 673, 700, 810, 814, 815
Field Work in Economic Geography, H. O. Lathrop, 551
Fifteen Cents More a Month, 665, 745
First-Year Transcription, Ellen Reierson, 16
Five-Seal Honor Club, The, 664, 745, 830
Functional Method of Teaching Gregg Shorthand, The, Louis A. Leslie, 96, 178, 264, 373, 431, 539
Fundamental Principles of Seeking Employment, Charles J. Jensen, 621

G

General Business Course for Non-Commercial Pupils, A, Heber H. Ryan, 423
General Business Training,
Field Trip, 68
Winona Theater Association, 35
General or Consumer Business Education Course, The, Benjamin R. Haynes, 270
Geography (See Economic Geography)
Germany, Shorthand in, 229
Golden Jubilee of Gregg Shorthand, F. Addington Symonds, 697
Good Morning! Emma Bell Hauch, 140
Grading Scales,
Transcription, 515, 581, 667, 803
Typewriting, 69
Gregg Writer,
Keys, 78, 161, 247, 331, 415, 517, 603, 689, 775, 861
Transcription Project, Florence Elaine Ulrich, 234, 315, 401, 460, 585
Greater Appreciation of Maps, A, V. C. Finch, 255
Guidance (See also Vocational Guidance)
And Business Education, E. G. Williamson, 86
Guiding the Commercial Student, Curtis Gentry, 119

H

How Do You Teach Salesmanship? Kenneth B. Haas, 645
How I Use the B.E.W., Ruth N. White, 133
How Minneapolis Schools Conduct Field Trips, C. C. Minty, 810
How Practical of Aristotle! Albert M. Berry, 834
How We Teach Office Appliances at Detroit Western High School, Audley M. Grossman, 444

I

I Take My Pen in Hand, 328, 412, 597, 682, 768, 859
In Other Magazines, Alice Black, 593, 769, 860
Instruction Sheets in Typewriting, Bernhard Bargen, 467, 564, 670, 760
Integration in Business Education, Ray G. Price, 739, 831
Interest Reipublicae Ut Sit Finis Litium, Cuddie E. Davidson, 773
Introduction to Business, A. O. Colvin, 463
Is the Commercial Department Selling Its Product? James E. Trabue, 783

J

Jobs That Train for Jobs, Mary Lapin, 375
"Journalism Accounting," 377
Junior Business Practice, 853
Projects, Milton Briggs, 50, 219, 302, 389, 486, 573, 661

K

Keys to Gregg Writer Shorthand Plates, 78, 161, 247, 331, 415, 517, 603, 689, 775, 861

L

Lamp of Experience, The, Harriet P. Banker, 68, 154, 226, 318, 394, 492, 590, 671, 751, 841
Law (See Business Law)
Legal Maxims, 60, 148, 192, 283, 471, 584, 773
Lesson Plan in Typewriting, 649
Letters, Business (See Business Correspondence)
Letters to the Editor, 328, 412, 597, 682, 768, 859

M

Magazine Reviews, 593, 769, 860
Making Bookkeeping Abstractions Concrete, Olivier Lefebvre, 277
Maps, A Greater Appreciation of, 255
Measurement of Personality, J. A. Long, 747
Measurements (See Tests)
Measuring the Outcomes of Bookkeeping Instruction, Paul L. Salsgiver, 547
Merchandising (See Retail Management)
Metabolism in Method, Frances Effinger Raymond, 9
Metropolitan High School's Graduate Business Department, 628
Mr. Deal Goes to School, Don T. Deal, 652, 711
Mooseheart's Education Program, 674
Motion Pictures for Business Education,
Bray, Alfred E., 511, 587
Van Horn, Lawrence, 61, 145, 237, 322, 411, 678, 761, 852

My Visit to the House of German Shorthand, Irma Ehrenhardt, 229

N

National Clerical Ability Tests, F. G. Nichols, 339
National Clubs, A List of, Robert H. Scott, 323
Negotiable Instruments, Harvey A. Andruss, 67
Nemo Tenetur Se Ipsum Accusare, Cuddie E. Davidson, 60
No Prerequisites for Typing Success, Marie E. Curtis, 12

O

Objectives of Commercial Clubs, Robert H. Scott, 759
Of Typewriters and Ships, Dorothy M. Johnson, 534
Office Appliances, How We Teach, at Detroit Western High School, 444
Office Machine Instruction, Your School Can Afford, 629
Office Practice,
  Teaching, by the Integrated Laboratory Plan, 189, 308
  Teaching Device,
    French, Wilma, 751
    S. M. N., 318
  Two Tested Work-and-Learn Plans for Business Students, 837
  We Teach, in Business Offices, 24
Office Supplies and Equipment (See "On the Lookout")
Omnis Innovatio Plus Novitate Perturbat Quam Utilitate Prodest, Cuddie E. Davidson, 584
On the Lookout, Archibald Alan Bowle, 58, 150, 241, 314, 407, 508, 583, 679, 763, 855
One-Semester Course in Nonvocational Bookkeeping, Lloyd V. Douglas, 355
One-Year Course in Bookkeeping, A. O. Colvin, 635
Ours Not to Reason Why? M. Emily Greenaway, 203

P

Personality,
  Measurement of, 747
  P. Q. More Important Than I. Q., 787
"Picking the Losers" in Transcription, Louis A. Leslie, 291
Placement,
  Follow-up, Alice Welch, 672
  Is the Commercial Department Selling Its Product? 783
  Student, 621
Plateaus Can Be Prevented, William R. Foster, 171
Plays,
  Good Morning! 140
  "To Err Is Human," But . . ., 500
Population Pattern of the Sierra Nevada, Ida May Shrode, 638
Poston Trypewriter, The, Wade Poston, Jr., 70
P. Q. More Important Than I. Q., Annie S. Greenwood, 787
Problems of a School Club, Robert H. Scott, 137
Projects for the Commercial Club, Robert H. Scott, 577, 673
Providing for Individual Differences Among Commercial Students, P. B. Jacobson, 344

R

Radio Broadcasting, Educational, 454
Radio in Commercial Education, 696
Ranking of Business Education Problems by State Departments, Harl R. Douglass, 174
Retail Management, 652, 711
Retailing as a Career, 454

S

Sales, True-False Test on, Harvey A. Andruss, 263
Salesmanship,
  Books Are Too Easy! Rufus C. Balaam, 731
  Contest, John N. Given and Willis M. Kenealy, 742
  How Do You Teach? 645
  Term Project in, 111, 208
Santa Claus--Big Business, Margaret Louise Wallace, 261
School Was Never Like This! Arthur G. Skeeles, 799
Secretarial Accounting, Clifford M. Davis, 438
Secretarial Practice, Ours Not to Reason Why? 203
Shall We Carelessly Say It's Carelessness? William R. Foster, 451, 557
Short Cuts in Typing Test Computations, Theo. R. Saldin, 131
Shorthand (See also Transcription)
  Correlating English with, 626
  Functional Method of Teaching Gregg, 96, 178, 264, 373, 431, 539
  German, 229
  Gregg, Golden Jubilee of, 697
  On a Shingle, James R. Power, 633
  Personal Use, Velma O. Abney, 591
  Speedbuilding Teaching Devices, Clyde I. Blanchard, 290, 392, 466, 677, 741
  Teachers' Medal Test, 31, 125, 472, 757, 846
  Teaching Device,
    Goldstein, Sydney, 590
    Lapin, Mary, 841
    McCutcheon, R. J., 318
    Pepper, Bernice M., 492
    Pugsley, Nellie D., 625
    S. M. N., 318
    Scott, W. J. G., 590
    Sister M. Alexius, 69
    Sister M. Leonella, 394
    Sister Mary Beata, 590
    Sister Mary Coleta, 319
    Sisters of St. Joseph, 592
    Stevenson, Wayne, 492
    Teeple, Edith L., 394
    Waneck, William O., 394
    Yandell, Frances G., 226
Sic Utere Tuo Ut Alienum Non Laedas, Cuddie E. Davidson, 283
Simplifying Bookkeeping Closing Procedures, Harvey A. Andruss, 719
Small High School, Business Education in the, 206
Small High School Guides Its Students, Joseph Burton Vasché, 287
SoRelle, Rupert P., John Robert Gregg, 440
Speech,
  For the Classroom Teacher, Dorothy I. Mulgrave, 6, 105, 189, 304, 369, 429, 647
  Training for Business Students, Polly Henderson, 797
"Speed 'em Up" Typing Drills, W. A. Larimer, 465, 601, 735
Streamlined Rhythm, Arnold E. Schneider, 536, 649
Strengthening the Business Curriculum, A. O. Colvin, 285

Student Clubs, 137, 221, 323, 354, 403, 509, 577, 673, 759, 853
Supervisor and the Classroom Teacher, John N. Given, 714
Supplementary Materials for Business Education, 59, 147, 238, 406, 499
Supplies and Equipment, 58, 150, 241, 314, 407, 508, 583, 679, 763, 855

T

Teacher Training, Teaching Device, Sister Jane, 841
Teaching Correspondence Through Class Discussion, Carl Naether, 717
Teaching Office Practice by the Integrated Laboratory Plan, J. M. Hanna, 185, 308
Teaching Shorthand Rules, Louis A. Leslie, 54
Teaching the Characteristics of Special Journals, P. W. Cutshall, 273
Term Project in Salesmanship, A, Alfred E. Bray, 111, 208
Test for Error-Checking Ability, A, William R. Foster, 807
Test on the Classification of Accounts, A, James A. McFadzen, 806
Testing and Scoring in Typewriting II, Mary Lapin, 279
Tests,
  Business Measures the Applicant, 89
  Business Law, 67, 132, 188, 263
  Clerical Ability, 339
Textbooks in Economic Geography, Oscar W. Dotson, 727
To Affiliate or Not to Affiliate, Robert H. Scott, 221
"To Err Is Human," But . . ., Elizabeth M. Kieffer and Irene Barnum, 500
Tomorrow's School of Business, Caroline S. Woodruff, 611
Transcription (See also Shorthand)
  And the Shorthand Contest, Louis A. Leslie, 123
  Department, 37, 123, 223, 291, 515, 581
  Effective Plan for Teaching, Wallace W. Renshaw, 351, 455
  English Power in, 27, 115
  First-Year, 16
  Grading Scales, 515, 581, 667, 803
  Project in Gregg Writer, 235, 315, 400, 460, 585
  Trypewriting and, 579
  Wondering and Wandering, 65, 143, 239, 397, 495, 667, 723, 803
Try Living, William Moulton Marston, 422
Trypewriting and Transcription, Elizabeth S. Adams, 579
Two Tested Work-and-Learn Plans for Business Students, Quincy Brown and Lillian E. Miles, 837
Typewriting,
  Artistic, 63, 148, 176, 205, 320, 390, 534, 588, 644, 709, 851
  Dexterity Drills, 317
  Errors, Checking of, William R. Foster, 359, 451, 557, 705, 807
  Grading System, Myron J. Garver, 69
  Habits Multiply, Edward D. Kramer, 360
  Instruction Sheets, 467, 564, 670, 760
  Jobs That Train for Jobs, 375
  Plateaus Can Be Prevented, 171
Typewriting (Continued)
  Rhythm in, 536, 649
  "Speed 'em Up" Drills, 465, 601, 735
  Teaching Device,
    Armagost, Thelma E., 395
    Barr, E. F., 227
    Black, Nettie, 753
    Cottingham, Adelean H., 226
    Dawley, Perry J., 753
    Edwardson, Astrid, 671
    Ehrenhardt, Irma, 155
    Gilbreth, Harold, 395
    Hadow, Herbert H., 751
    King, Florence, 226
    McFadzen, J. A., 494
    McMahon, Ruth, 842
    Oldham, Grace, 154
    Oliver, Marguerite, 493
    Ostby, Gena, 492
    Reed, Walter L., 396
    S. M. N., 318
    Sister M. Agnesene, 752
    Sister M. John LaSalle, 318
    Walker, Ernest L., 228
    Witham, Beatrice, 752
  Testing and Scoring, 279
  Tests, Short Cuts in Computing, 131
Typing,
  Direct Approach to the Teaching of, 789
  Success, No Prerequisites for, 12
  Tests, Accuracy-Percentage Chart for, Sister St. Rita, 734

V

Visual Education (See Motion Pictures)
Vitalizing the Study of Economic Geography, H. Harrison Russell, 815
Vocational Guidance,
  Guidance and Business Education, 86
  Guiding the Commercial Student, 119
  Placement Study Report, 454
  Small High School Guides Its Students, 287

W

We Teach Office Practice in Business Offices, Grace W. Bruce, 24
What Business Education Problems Do Administrators Consider Important? Harl R. Douglass, 1
What "White-Collar" Business Expects of High School Graduates, G. A. Prosser, 525
Who Should Take Business Courses? Harl R. Douglass, 85
Why Don't Our Pupils Check All Their Typing Errors? William R. Foster, 359
Why Read a Professional Magazine? Earl Clevenger, 176
Winona Theater Association, Leslie W. Johnson, 35
Wondering and Wandering, Louis A. Leslie, 65, 143, 239, 397, 495, 667, 723, 803
Work Sheet, Introduction to the, Hazel Creal, 276
Would You Advance? Then Read! Jessie Graham, 735

XYZ

X-Ray Charts, Clyde I. Blanchard, 290, 392, 466, 677, 741
Your Professional Reading, Jessie Graham, 74, 158, 242, 325, 408, 512, 594, 680, 764, 856
Your School Can Afford Office Machine Instruction, Earl P. Strong, 629

Part II

CONTRIBUTORS

A

Adams, Elizabeth S., 579
Albright, Frank S., 317
Alpern, Hyman, 349, 427
Andruss, Harvey A., 67, 132, 188, 268, 719
Apel, Charles, 561

B

Balaam, Rufus C., 731
Banker, Harriet P., 68, 154, 226, 318, 394, 492, 590, 671, 751, 841
Bargen, Bernhard, 467, 564, 670, 760
Barnum, Irene, 500
Beach, Erold B., 135
Berry, Albert M., 834
Birch, C. E., 427
Black, Alice, 593, 769, 860
Blanchard, Clyde I., 290, 392, 466, 677, 741
Bowle, Archibald Alan, 58, 150, 241, 314, 407, 508, 583, 679, 763, 855
Bray, Alfred E., 111, 208, 511, 587
Briggs, Milton, 48, 50, 217, 219, 300, 302, 386, 389, 483, 486, 571, 573, 658, 661, 828
Broom, M. E., 700
Brown, Quincy, 837
Bruce, Grace W., 24
Brummund, Lina, 759

C

Carter, Edna L., 749
Casto, E. Ray, 193
Clevenger, Earl, 176
Colvin, A. O., 206, 285, 367, 463, 635
Conklin, E. M., 349
Creal, Hazel, 276
Curtis, Marie, 12
Cutshall, P. W., 273

D

Davidson, Cuudie E., 60, 148, 192, 283, 471, 584, 773
Davis, Clifford M., 438
Deal, Don T., 652, 711
DeBrum, Joseph, 59, 147, 238, 406, 499
Dexter, Walter F., 781
Dotson, Oscar W., 727
Douglas, Lloyd V., 355
Douglass, Harl R., 1, 85, 174
Duren, Juell, 853

E

Ehrenhardt, Irma, 229
Elliott, Eugene B., 88

F

Fasnacht, H. D., 427
Feingold, Gustave A., 426
Finch, Robert E., 435
Finch, V. C., 255
Flanagan, George A., 391, 589, 644
Ford, Evelyn Soulé, 754
Foster, William R., 14, 171, 281, 359, 376, 451, 557, 650, 705, 793, 807
Fuller, Harry P., 427, 533

G

Gaskill, Arthur E., 696
Gentry, Curtis, 119
Given, John N., 244, 714, 742
Good, H. I., 88, 244
Grady, William E., 538
Graham, Jessie, 74, 158, 242, 325, 408, 512, 594, 680, 736, 764, 856
Greenaway, M. Emily, 203
Greenwood, Annie S., 787
Gregg, John Robert, 440
Grossman, Audley M., 444

H

Haas, Kenneth B., 645
Hallman, M. S., 533
Hanna, J. M., 185, 308
Harap, Henry, 613
Hauch, Emma Bell, 140
Haynes, Benjamin R., 270
Henderson, Polly, 797
Henry, Albert, 311
Hutchinson, E. Lillian, 27, 115

J

Jacobson, P. B., 344
Jensen, Charles J., 621
Johnson, Dorothy M., 44, 213, 298, 384, 481, 535, 569, 656, 744, 827, 829
Johnson, Leslie W., 35
Jones, Lloyd L., 89
Jones, W. B., 350

K

Kenealy, Willis M., 742
Kesselman, William, 363
Kieffer, Elizabeth M., 500
Kilzer, L. R., 529
Kittrell, C. A., 426, 533
Kramer, Edward D., 360

L

Lapin, Mary, 279, 375
Larimer W. A., 465, 601, 735
Lefebvre, Olivier, 277
Leslie, Louis A., 37, 54, 65, 96, 123, 143, 178, 223, 239, 264, 291, 373, 397, 431, 495, 515, 539, 581, 667, 723, 803
Long, J. A., 747

M

Marston, William Moulton, 422
McFadzen, James A., 806
McGinn, Margaret M., 63, 148, 176, 205, 320, 390, 588, 644, 709, 851
Mears, Louise W., 477
Miles, Lillian E., 837
Miller, Jay W., 556
Minty, C. C., 810
Mulgrave, Dorothy I., 6, 105, 189, 304, 369, 429, 647

N

Naether, Carl, 717

Nelson, Anne, 244
Nichols, Frederick G., 244, 339

P

Piepenbrink, William J., 108
Porter, Persis, 403
Poston, Wade, Jr., 70
Powell, F. V., 506
Power, James R., 633
Price, Ray G., 685, 739, 756, 831, 843
Primmer, George H., 101
Prosser, G. A., 525

R

Rau, John W., 19
Raymond, Frances Effinger, 9
Reader, James G., 88
Reed, Clinton A., 244
Reierson, Ellen, 16
Renshaw, Wallace W., 351, 455
Reynolds, Helen, 454
Richardson, Grace E., 404
Ridgley, Douglas C., 729
Russell, H. Harrison, 815
Ryan, Heber H., 423

S

Saldin, Theo. R., 131
Salsgiver, Paul L., 547
Satlow, I. David, 199
Schneider, Arnold E., 536, 649
Scott, Robert H., 137, 221, 323, 509, 577, 673
Seaman, H. K., 814
Selby, P. O., 350, 427
Shaffer, Laurance F., 178, 266, 433, 544
Shrode, Ida May, 638
Sister St. Rita, 734
Skeeles, Arthur G., 799
Smith, Harold H., 725, 792
Spencer, B. W., 349
Stern, Albert, 733
Strong, Earl P., 629
Symonds, F. Addington, 697

T

Tidwell, M. Fred, 789
Trabue, James E., 783
Tracy, Rhoda, 626
Trytten, John M., 427, 533

U

Ulrich, Florence E., 31, 77, 125, 234, 245, 315, 327, 401, 414, 460, 472, 585, 602, 757, 846

V

Van Cott, Harrison, 349
Van Horn, Lawrence, 61, 145, 237, 322, 411, 678, 761, 852
Vance, H. F., 100
Vaché, Joseph Burton, 287

W

Wallace, Margaret Louise, 261
White, Ruth N., 133
Wieland, John A., 88
Williamson, E. G., 86
Wood, Helen, 844
Woodruff, Caroline S., 611

Y

Young, C. R., 349, 427

Part III

ORGANIZATIONS, SCHOOLS, AND NAMES IN THE NEWS

A

Adams, Maude L., 184
Agnew, Peter L., 73
Allen, Richard D., 699
Alpha Iota, 34, 139, 396, 450, 730
American Association of School Administrators, 528
American Business Writing Association, 52, 338
American College Personnel Association, 443
American Council of Guidance and Personnel Associations, 443
American Education Week, 95
American Institute of Commerce, 8
American Vocational Association, 4, 104, 225, 433
Anderson, Ross, 267
Andruss, Harvey A., 57
Apel, Charles, 222, 850

B

Ball State Conference, 600
Barnhart, Earl W., 620
Barrie, Alice Faircloth, 814
Bauer, Nicholas, 669
Beacons on Business Education, 30
Benbow, Spencer D., 38
Benson, J. H., 34
Benson School of Commerce, 450
Bethlehem Business College, 52
Bexell, Dean J. A., Obituary, 684
Blackstone, Earl G., 748, 809
Blanchard, Clyde, 683
Bookkeeping Bibliography, 722
Boston University, 338, 718
Brown, C. Guy, 850
Brown's College of Commerce, 576
Bryant College, 782
Burlingame, Billings, 686
Burmahln, E. F., 565
Business Education Association of New York, 30
Business Institute, 794

C

Cadisch, Gordon F., Obituary, 198
Calhoun, John Ellwood, Obituary, 672
California Business Educators Association, 52
California Conference on Business Education, 632
Callarman, C. C., 198
Canaday, Denta, 184
Canadian Gregg Association, 362
Carkin, Seth B., Obituary, 820
Carmichael, Vernal H., 284
Central Commercial Teachers Association, 439, 798
Chaim, Henry I., 439

Chicago Area Business Education Directors Association, 448
Childs, Elmer E., Obituary, 612
Chillicothe Business College, 598
Cochrane, Theodore W., 450
Collins, Clem W., 272
Commercial Education Association of New York City, 222, 284
Condit, Ira S., 52, 100
Connecticut Conference, 578
Consumer Education Course Outline, 559
Consumer Quiz, 730
Contests,
International High Schools, 151
Typewriting,
Catholic High Schools, 114, 663, 713
International, 118
World's Championship, 31
Coover, John Edgar, Obituary, 612
Corcoran, Anne M., 107
Criticism, Suggestion and Advice, 157
Currie, Wallace, 173
Curtis, N. B., 202, 559
Cutshall, Paul W., 794

D

Davidson, Cuddie E., 686
Davis, Benjamin F., 788
Davis Business College, 840
Davison, Hurford H., 686
Delta Pi Epsilon, 259, 850
Denver Retail Institute, 722
Distributive Occupations Methods Course, 284
Dommy, J. G., 642
Dorman, Allison, 722
Douglas, Lloyd V., 52, 100

E

Eastern Commercial Teachers Association, 260, 377, 555, 560, 643, 710, 795
Clerical Ability Tests, 339
Educational Abstracts, 464
Ehrenhardt, Irma, 565
Engler, Ervin W., 293
Ennis, Isobel A., 560
Evans, Helen W., 99

F

Fish, Louis J., 157
Forkner, H. L., 38
Forney, W. C., 57

G

Garbutt, Irving R., 21
Gaylord, E. E., 157
George-Deen Act, 88
Gilbert, James D., 15
Given, John N., 788
Goldey College, 850
Graham, Jessie, 100
Gray, L. E., 34
Gregg, John Robert, 654
Gregg Shorthand, Golden Jubilee, 551, 655
Gregg Teacher's Certificate, 121
Gregor, Frank, Jr., 683
Griffin, Ernest, 733
Guy, Hollis P., 184

H

Hafer, Edith, 439
Haines, William E., 233
Hamilton School of Commerce, 146
Harman, Pinckney J., 533
Hastings, Mabel S., Obituary, 476
Hatfield, E. E., 476
Haynes, Benjamin R., 56, 146
Henderson, Herbert T., 546
Hills, Clarissa, 576
Hiram College, 528
Historical Films, 462
Holtsclaw, J. L., 833
Humphrey, Clyde W., 56, 95
Humphreys, John R., Obituary, 146

I

Illinois State Commercial Contests, 377
Illinois State Personality Contests, 538
Indiana Business Teachers Conference, 343
Indiana Conference, 576
Inland Empire Education Association, 786
International Commercial Schools Contest, 738
International Honor Society, 393

J

Jarrett, Fred., 704
Jones, Lloyd L., 788

K

Kanzer, Edward M., 15
Kyker, B. Frank, 377

L

Lawrence, Nancy M., Obituary, 66
Lighting for Schools, 725
Littlejohn, W. W., 672

M

Macon, George A., 550
Massell, Alexander S., 470
McAndrew, William, 117
McCann, Charles R., 4
McKinsey, James O., Obituary, 372
McMahan, Herbert E., 233
Metropolitan Junior Achievement, 726
Michigan Commercial Education Association, 858
Milligan, Jack, 684
Mississippi Course of Study, 55
Moore, James A., 450
Moshier, Ida, 722
Motion Picture Films on Shorthand and Typewriting, 289

N

National Association of Accredited Commercial Schools, 130, 480
National Association of Commercial Teacher Training Institutions, 498, 637
National Association of Deans of Women, 443
National Business College Week, 707, 850
National Catholic High School Typists Association, 114, 663, 713
National Clerical Ability Tests, 686
National Commercial Teachers Federation, 21, 130, 197, 268, 446, 586, 782
National Council of Business Education, 497
National Education Association,
Department of Business Education, 4, 5, 354, 443, 704, 819
Department of Secondary School Principals, 157
National Mimeograph Paper Association, 393

National Shorthand Reporters Association, 126
National Vocational Guidance Association, 443
New England High School Commercial Teachers, 38, 228, 343
New York City Teachers Examinations, 858
New York State Vocational Education Association, 470
New York University, 343
Newark Commercial Teacher Licenses, 563
Nichols, F. G., 376
Nichols, L. T., 686
Nolan, C. A., 199

O

Odell, Carmi J., 648
Ohio Commercial Contests, 599
Oklahoma A. & M. College, 286
Oklahoma Conference on Commercial Education, 55

P

Packard School, 289
Parker, G. H., 95
Parker, Miriam, 310
Peck, Roscoe H., Obituary, 139, 184
Peirce, Caleb, Obituary, 718
Peirce School of Business Administration, 580
Perry, Ruby V., 293
Personality, Discussion, 498
Pi Omega Pi, 260
Popper, Camillo, Obituary, 55
Port Arthur College, 782
Potter, Thelma M., 15
Powell, Charles R., Obituary, 646
Powers, Orville M., Obituary, 66
Puckett, Cecil, 56
Pugh, Stanley, 110

Q

Quinn, B. W., 173
Quinn, H. U., 814

R

Raymond, Frances Effinger, 11
Reavis, George H., 684
Review of Commercial Education, 30
Reynolds, Helen, 15
Rice, Louis, 833
Richards, Albert E., Obituary, 377
Richards, William A., 307
Rider College, 686
Rippey, Fannie H., 563
Roberts, John S., Obituary, 533
Rollinson, Charles, Obituary, 293
Rosenberg, R. Robert, 139
Rygiel, Walter S., 669

S

Sawyer School of Business, 233
Seaton, Paul W., 559
Schneider, Arnold E., 405
Schoevers' Institute, 434
Sexson, John A., 528
Sherman, Stanley, 722
Shields, Dr. H. G., 479
Shilt, Bernard A., 88
Siekman, J. H., Obituary, 716
Slaughter, R. E., 52, 121
Slinker, Clay D., 56
SoRelle, Rupert P., Obituary, 342
Southeastern Tennessee Commercial Education Association, 462
Southern Business Education Association, 142, 365, 699
Southwestern Private Commercial Schools Association, 402
Spangler, P. S., 57
Speech Education in Missouri, 266
Stern, Albert, 457
Stewart, Lem, 534
Studebaker, John W., 62
Summer Session Directory, 687, 771
Summer Sessions, Specialists at, 707
Swanson, Edwin A., 809
Syracuse University Conference, 704

T

Tangora, Albert, 30
Thompson, James M., 146
Tidwell, M. Fred, 293
Tonne, Herbert A., 836
Tri-State Commercial Education Association, 21, 278, 620, 738, 802
Tull, A. F., 794
Tyler Commercial College, 528

U

Underwood, John F., Obituary, 52
University of Alabama, 794
University of Arkansas, 738
University of Chicago Conference, 430, 528, 794
University of Denver Business Education Conference, 63, 704
University of Illinois, 8
University of Indiana Commercial Teachers Conference, 11, 782
University of Southern California Conference, 704
University of Toledo, 683

W

Walker, Arthur L., 368
Wells, Inez Ray, 368
Wine, N. B., 625
Winecoff, Anna T., 707
Wurtzel, Laura, 560

XYZ

Yerian, Theodore, 100
Zelliot, Ernest A., 56
Zimmerman, J. Earl, 625

Part IV

PORTRAITS AND CUTS

A

Agnew, Peter L., 643
Agnew, Ruby A., 847
Allyn, C. Vance, Students of, 383
Altholz, Nathaniel, 643
American Institute of Commerce, 8
Anderson, Ross, 267
Andrews, J. C., 122
Andruss, Harvey A., 57, 719
Apel, Charles, 561

B

Babel, F. A., Students of, 294
Balaam, Rufus C., 731
Banker, Harriet P., 68
Barg, H. E., 447
Bargen, Bernhard, 467
Barnum, Irene, 501
Barr, E. F., Students of, 568
Beach, Erold B., 135
Bearhope, Mina, 34
Berkman, Fred, 472
Berry, Albert M., 834
Bishnow, Ethel, 402
Blackstone, Earl G., 809
Bloom, Russell L., 847
Bobbitt, Russell P., 278, 802
Botsford, Frances, 447
Bowers, Frances B., 637
Bowle, Archibald Alan, 58
Boyle, Clarence S., 497
Boynton, Paul M., 643
Students of, 26
Bray, Alfred E., 111
Breeden, Loren, Students of, 383
Briggs, Milton, 48
Broom, M. E., 700
Brown, C. Guy, 850
Brown, Julia, Students of, 383
Brown, Quincy, 837
Bruce, Grace W., 24
Brunell, Vivian J., Students of, 294

C

Cadisch, Gordon F., 198
Carkin, Seth B., 820
Carmichael, Vernal H., 284, 637
Carter, Edna L., 749
Carter, Kenneth F., Students of, 295
Casto, E. Ray, 193
Central Commercial Teachers Association, Officers, 790
Chaim, Henry R., 439
Chavarria, Sally, 823
Chicks, 39
Church, Beulah C., Students of, 383
Clemens, Rothsay E., 362
Cochrane, Theodore W., 450
Collins, Clem W., 272
Colvin, A. O., 206
Cooper, Ralph E., 472
Crerar, Jean, 362
Curtis, Marie E., 12
Curtis, N. B., 202, 278, 559

D

Dallas, W. G., 447
Daniels, Guy, 269
Davis, Clifford M., 438
Dawson, C. C., 497
Deal, Don T., 652
DeBrum, Joseph, 4, 59, 819
Dexter, Walter F., 781
Dickey, Elizabeth M., 846
Dodge, Martha M., 34
Dorman, Allison, 722
Dotson, Oscar W., 727
Douglas, Lloyd V., 355
Douglas, William E., 643
Douglass, Harl R., 1
Dozois, Jeanne M., 847
Dupraw, Martin J., 655
Duren, Juell, 853
Students of, 853
Dwyer, Elizabeth E., 473

E

Eastern Commercial Teachers Association Officers, 710
Ely, Margaret H., 802
Evans, Helen W., 99

F

Fawcett, Robert L., 802
Ferguson, Jean, 822
Ferguson, Mary E., Students of, 295
Ferrell, B. S., 846
File, Clinton M., 497
Finch, Robert, 436
Fish, J. F., 480
Ford, Evelyn Soulé, 754
Forney, W. C., 57
Forsman, A. Edwin, 447
Foster, William R., 171
Fox, Frederick G., 846

G

Gard, E. E., 447
Gentry, Curtis, 119
Given, John N., 714
Good, Harry I., 643
Goodfellow, R. C., 643
Goodman, Kennard E., 738, 802
Goyette, Dorilla, 847
Grady, William E., 538
Graham, Jessie, 74
Green, H. H., 447
Greenaway, M. Emily, 203
Gregg, John Robert, 655, 698
Grossman, Audley M., 444
Guy, Hollis P., 184

H

Haas, Kenneth B., 645
Hafer, Edith, 439
Haines, William E., 233
Hamilton, Herbert A., 497
Hanna, J. M., 185
Harap, Henry, 613
Harb, Harry W., 269
Harman, Pinckney J., 533
Harnack, Elizabeth C., 473
Harris, Winfred H., 497
Harrison, Josephine T., 472
Hatfield, E. E., 405, 846
Hauch, Emma Bell, 244
Haynes, Benjamin R., 56, 270
Heins, Princess, 473
Henderson, Herbert T., 546
Henion, Marjorie, 823
Hill, J. Murray, 269, 447
Hills, Clarissa, 576
Hossfield, George L., 118
Houser, Mary Owen, 847
Huff, Nettie M., 447
Hull, E. M., 480
Humphrey, Clyde W., 57, 497
Hutchinson, E. Lillian, 27

I

International Typewriting Contest Winners, 118

J

Jarrett, Fred., 362
Jenison, Edward P., 643
Jensen, Charles J., 621
Johnson, David E., 447
Johnson, Dorothy M., 44
Johnson, Leslie W., 36
Jones, Lloyd L., 89

K

Kesselman, William, 363
Kieffer, Elizabeth M., 500
Kilchenstein, Laila, 802
Kilzer, L. R., 529
Kirk, John G., 643
Knepper, E. G., 269
Knight, Sam, 402
Kyker, B. Frank, 377

L

Lang, Karl, 229
Lapin, Mary, 279
Larimer, W. A., 465
Lathrop, H. O., 551
Le Clair, Cecil, 472
Leslie, Louis A., 37
Lloyd, Arnold M., 643
Lodi, Alma, 822
Lott, Edril, Students of, 294
Lusebrink, Rose, 847

M

Maclean, Lola, 4, 819
Macon, George A., 550
Marshall, W. F., 362
Massell, Alexander S., 470
Mattern, Roy T., 278
McClellan, George E., 447
McKinsey, James O., 372
McMahan, Herbert E., 233
Meadows, George A., 269
Meehan, Agnes, 269
Miles, Lillian E., 837
Miller, E. G., 269
Miller, Jay W., 269, 447
Minty, C. C., 810
Moore, William L., 269
Mooseheart School, 674
Moses, Horace A., 726
Mulgrave, Dorothy I., 6

N

Naether, Carl, 717
Neft, Tillie, 846
Nichols, F. G., 339
Nichols, L. T., 402
Nichols, T. E., 122
North, Frances Doub, 4, 819
Nulty, Catherine F., 637

O

Oakland School Publishers' Exhibit, 578
Ohmen, Waneta DeForest, 472
Oldham, Grace, 847
Oliver, Dean, 473

P

Palmer, Mary, 846
Parker, G. H., Students of, [redacted]
Parker, Miriam, 310
Parrish, R. D., Students of, 307
Paul, Ruth E., 847
Peck, Roscoe H., 184
Peiffer, Jeannette, 847
Pepper, Roland S., 847
Perry, J. M., Jr., 473
Poston Trypewriter, 70
Power, James R., 633
Price, Ray G., 739
Prosser, G. A., 525

R

Raymond, Frances Effinger, 11
Redfield, Thomas, 269, 447
Reed, Clinton A., 643
Reierson, Ellen, 16
Renshaw, Wallace W., 351
Reynolds, Helen, 497
Rice, Louis, 833
Richards, William A., 307
Ridgley, Douglas C., 19
Riecke, Frederick H., 4, 819
Rose, Tom, 497
Rosedahl, Helen Linéa, 846
Rosenberg, R. Robert, 139
Rosser, J. M., 362
Roszell, M. C., 362
Russell, H. Harrison, 815
Ryan, Heber H., 423
Rygiel, Walter S., 669

S

Salsgiver, Paul L., 547
Sam Houston State Teachers College Conference, 260
Satlow, I. David, 199
Schlichter, Dorothy M., 472
Schneider, Arnold E., 405, 536
Schreitz, Caroline M., 846
Scott, Robert H., 137, 509
Seaton, Paul W., 559
Shaffer, Laurance F., 181, 266
Shaw, Agatha McLarry, 472
Shields, H. G., 479
Shilt, Bernard A., 88
Shorthand Contest, New York City Gregg Shorthand Teachers Association, 22
Shrode, Ida May, 638
Sinclair, Ruth E., 473
Sister Antoine de l'Assomption, 847
Sister Frances, Students of, 823
Sister Gérard-du-Rédempteur, 473
Sister Helen Regina, Students of, 295
Sister Mariangela, Students of, 294, 822
Sister Marie de Lourdes, 846
Sister Mary Ignatia, Students of, 295
Sister Mary Mediatrix, 34
Skimin, Eleanor, 269, 447
Slaughter, R. E., 121
Slinker, Clay D., 56
Luncheon Honoring, 449
Smith, Harry A., 473
Solomon, Ida, 846
SoRelle, Rupert P., 441
Spangler, P. S., 57
Stephens, A. C., 447
Stone, Myrtle M., 497
Stover, George C., 802
Strong, Earl P., 629
Strony, Madeline, Students of, [redacted]
Studebaker, M. E., 447
Stull, Ralph L., Students of, [redacted]
Stullken, Florence, 269
Suhr, A. M., 402
Sutherland, Arlie, 472

T

Tangora, Albert, 30
Thompson, James M., 146
Tidwell, M. Fred, 789
Trabue, James E., 783
Tyler, Susette, 643

U

Ulrich, Florence E., 31

V

Van Antwerp, Fidelia A., Students of, 822
Vaché, Joseph Burton, 287

W

Wagoner, Jua, 847
Walker, Arthur L., 368
Walters, R. G., 269
Ward, Frank, 362
Webb, R. F., 278
Wells, Inez Ray, 368
Whitten, R. H., 122
Williams, B. F., 480
Woodbury College, 122
Wurtzel, Laura, 560

Z

Zelliot, Ernest A., 56
Ziegler, Sadie L., 643
Zimmerman, J. Earl, 269, 625

The contents of this journal are indexed monthly in the Education Index.

M

Maclean, Lola, 4, 819
Macon, George A., 550
Marshall, W. F., 362
Massell, Alexander S., 470
Mattern, Roy T., 278
McClellan, George E., 447
McKinsey, James O., 372
McMahan, Herbert E., 233
Meadows, George A., 269
Meehan, Agnes, 269
Miles, Lillian E., 837
Miller, E. G., 269
Miller, Jay W., 269, 447
Minty, C. C., 810
Moore, William L., 269
Mooseheart School, 674
Moses, Horace A., 726
Mulgrave, Dorothy I., 6

N

Naether, Carl, 717
Neft, Tillie, 846
Nichols, F. G., 339
Nichols, L. T., 402
Nichols, T. E., 122
North, Frances Doub, 4, 819
Nulty, Catherine F., 637

O

Oakland School Publishers' Exhibit, 578
Ohmen, Waneta DeForest, 472
Oldham, Grace, 847
Oliver, Dean, 473

P

Palmer, Mary, 846
Parker, G. H., Students of, 823
Parker, Miriam, 310
Parrish, R. D., Students of, 307
Paul, Ruth E., 847
Peck, Roscoe H., 184
Peiffer, Jeannette, 847
Pepper, Roland S., 847
Perry, J. M., Jr., 473
Poston Trypewriter, 70
Power, James R., 633
Price, Ray G., 739
Prosser, G. A., 525

R

Raymond, Frances Effinger, 11
Redfield, Thomas, 269, 447
Reed, Clinton A., 643
Reierson, Ellen, 16
Renshaw, Wallace W., 351
Reynolds, Helen, 497
Rice, Louis, 833
Richards, William A., 307
Ridgley, Douglas C., 19
Riecke, Frederick H., 4, 819
Rose, Tom, 497
Rosedahl, Helen Linéa, 846
Rosenberg, R. Robert, 139
Rosser, J. M., 362
Roszell, M. C., 362
Russell, H. Harrison, 815
Ryan, Heber H., 423
Rygiel, Walter S., 669

S

Salsgiver, Paul L., 547
Sam Houston State Teachers College Conference, 260
Satlow, I. David, 199
Schlichter, Dorothy M., 472
Schneider, Arnold E., 405, 536
Schreitz, Caroline M., 846
Scott, Robert H., 137, 509
Seaton, Paul W., 559
Shaffer, Laurance F., 181, 266
Shaw, Agatha McLarry, 472
Shields, H. G., 479
Shilt, Bernard A., 88
Shorthand Contest, New York City Gregg Shorthand Teachers Association, 22
Shrode, Ida May, 638
Sinclair, Ruth E., 473
Sister Antoine de l'Assomption, 847
Sister Frances, Students of, 823
Sister Gérard-du-Rédempteur, 473
Sister Helen Regina, Students of, 295
Sister Mariangela, Students of, 294, 822
Sister Marie de Lourdes, 846
Sister Mary Ignatia, Students of, 295
Sister Mary Mediatrix, 34
Skimin, Eleanor, 269, 447
Slaughter, R. E., 121
Slinker, Clay D., 56
Luncheon Honoring, 449
Smith, Harry A., 473
Solomon, Ida, 846
SoRelle, Rupert P., 441
Spangler, P. S., 57
Stephens, A. C., 447
Stone, Myrtle M., 497
Stover, George C., 802
Strong, Earl P., 629
Strony, Madeline, Students of, 383
Studebaker, M. E., 447
Stull, Ralph L., Students of, 383
Stullken, Florence, 269
Suhr, A. M., 402
Sutherland, Arlie, 472

T

Tangora, Albert, 30
Thompson, James M., 146
Tidwell, M. Fred, 789
Trabue, James E., 783
Tyler, Susette, 643

U

Ulrich, Florence E., 31

V

Van Antwerp, Fidelia A., Students of, 822
Vaché, Joseph Burton, 287

W

Wagoner, Jua, 847
Walker, Arthur L., 368
Walters, R. G., 269
Ward, Frank, 362
Webb, R. F., 278
Wells, Inez Ray, 368
Whitten, R. H., 122
Williams, B. F., 480
Woodbury College, 122
Wurtzel, Laura, 560

Z

Zelliot, Ernest A., 56
Ziegler, Sadie L., 643
Zimmerman, J. Earl, 269, 625

The contents of this journal are indexed monthly in the Education Index.

Editorially Speaking

AT the beginning of the new school year we return to our classroom and administrative duties determined to ascend to new professional heights. It is a fitting time for all of us to state exactly what we propose to accomplish this year; also our method of procedure.

Each of us naturally is concerned, first of all, with his own professional improvement and the welfare of those whose education is his immediate responsibility. We must not lose sight, however, of certain nation-wide needs of commercial education that must be satisfied in order to make possible the fruition of our own individual aims.

We point with pride to the large and constantly growing enrollment in business subjects. We proclaim the necessity of a minimum business education for everybody. We proudly call attention to the worth-whileness of our responsibility in the training of the country's future business leaders and their army of assistants.

There is no gainsaying that we are members of a great profession engaged in a work of tremendous importance to the future of every citizen of this country, for, after the experience of the past few years, even the most ignorant citizen now knows that, as business goes, so goes the country.

Our Major Problems Not Local

No longer can we, as individuals, look on our professional problems from merely a local point of view. The solution to our major problems can come only from a state and national consideration by those vested with sufficient executive authority to bring about the requisite improvements.

Among the present needs that the BEW considers indispensable to the welfare of business education, adequate supervision is placed first.

Adequate Supervision a Necessity

Business education can no longer dispense with adequate city and state and national supervision. A vigorous campaign must be launched and carried on until our goal is achieved. Supervision of commercial education is still in its infancy in 1937 and, when considered in relation to its need, is woefully inadequate.

A great deal of the responsibility for this condition lies at our own door. We should have available at least ten times as many specialists in the administration of business education as we have.

Wherever there has arisen in our ranks a commercial educator possessing the qualifications for wise administrative leadership, he has been placed upon an equal footing with other educational administrators and has been given an enviable administrative freedom in carrying out the supervisory responsibilities assigned to him. Wherever the influence of this group has been felt, commercial education has benefited, but their numbers are far too few. We have only three or four state directors of commercial education, and some thirty city directors, instead of the several hundred that our needs demand.

Too many commercial educators are permitting certain local problems to overshadow state and national problems, which, when solved, will automatically solve these local problems.

One of the most difficult and most time-consuming problems that is being

treated locally is curriculum building. We grant that a curriculum should be localized to a certain extent, but this local adaptation is a very minor and relatively unimportant contribution to the curriculum. The core content and instruction of the major subjects in business education are not affected by local geography.

National Curriculum Building

We can think of no greater immediate benefit to commercial education than the creation of a national committee on curriculum building in our field. Curriculum making is a highly specialized undertaking and should receive the full time and consideration of those engaged in it. The desired results can never be obtained through the placing of this responsibility in the hands of innumerable teacher committees, whose personnel is made up usually of the most progressive teachers in a local community, already overloaded with a heavy teaching and administrative schedule plus extracurricular responsibilities.

Curriculum building is not a fair assignment to give to teachers and administrators as an after-school responsibility, or even as a part-time responsibility. Our hats are off to those who have accepted this responsibility in the past, and to those who are entering a new year with this responsibility on their shoulders.

We are proud of the courses of study that mark the achievement of many of these committees, but the cost has been too heavy, and the progress too slow, and the results confined to too narrow an area.

Misdirected Energy

Let us do away with this vast amount of unnecessary duplication of the time and effort of local curriculum committees and take the necessary steps to place this most important activity in the hands of full-time state and national committees adequately staffed and financed to do the job in keeping with its tremendous importance.

The BEW is glad to throw its columns open this year to a frank and constructive discussion of this major need of business education, but, more important still, ideas and discussions must be converted into action.

Let us pledge ourselves that the school year of 1937-1938 will mark the greatest national growth thus far made in the administration of commercial education.

Our teacher-training departments and our teacher associations, by means of their convention programs, their intelligently planned yearbooks, and their concerted action, through the National Council of Business Education, can be counted on to continue the excellent progress they are making in the solution of our problems. Participation in our efforts for national advancement is not confined, however, to any one association or to group activity.

National Campaign Launched

Each of us has his own valuable contribution to offer. BEW's contribution this year is based upon a carefully worked out plan which was announced in the May issue, and which takes concrete form in this month's lead article by Dr. Harl Douglass, of the University of Minnesota.

Throughout the school year, Dr. Douglass will edit our new department devoted to the organization and administration of commercial education. The National Council of Business Education is collaborating with us in the conduct of this department. We have also been assured the whole-hearted cooperation of many of this country's leading school superintendents and principals.

A national campaign has been launched and will be carried on vigorously and intelligently. Let us all put our shoulders to the wheel and give to commercial education those requisites she needs to accomplish her worthy aims.